

Title: MY RIVAL, MY LOVE

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PART I  
A Shadowy Jester Book

It all started when I met the one and only man who had the ability to make me question what I once regarded to be sound ideals. I never was a religious person; perhaps that was due to the fact that I was never an insecure person. I have always believed that people that are insecure turn to their gods for guidance, love, and protection. I never needed that. Never, that is, until Alain walked into my life.

I had been sewing a new gown for the season party when I realized I had broken my last needle. I had no choice but to find the tailor and purchase new needles from him. I had never been to his shop, and felt nervous about going there. We were rivals for I, too, made my living sewing clothing. When I got to his shop, I found the door pulled closed, but not latched. I let myself in and looked around. There was no one present. I took advantage of the moment and looked at what could very easily put me out of business. I knew that the only way to save my job, my LIFE!, was to destroy all of his work, thereby bringing all of his

customers to me.

As I proceeded to rip  
seams and remove  
buttons, I heard what I  
thought to be a door  
creaking. I turned around,  
and there he was, shining  
in all his glory. Lighting  
up the room with his  
golden blond hair,  
momentarily, I forgot  
where I was and what I  
was doing. I quickly  
dropped the gown I was  
demolishing and stood  
there slack-jawed. 'Just  
what do you think you  
are doing?!" he melodically  
asked. 'I purchased this  
gown, and it was delivered  
to me in this state of  
disrepair,' I answered,  
frightened by the look on  
his face. 'Oh, no you did  
not purchase that gown,  
nor was it delivered to  
you in any state of  
repair or disrepair! I  
know who you are! You  
are Elise, the Seamstress,  
and I will not allow you  
in my shop! GET OUT!"

He was beyond anger. I  
had never known anyone  
to act so irrationally  
over a silly piece of  
fabric, so I placed it  
down upon the table  
before me. 'Do you really  
think that I am a  
Seamstress? How silly!' I  
was doing my best to  
convince him that I was  
not who he had accused  
me of being. 'I just came  
to your shop to look at  
your fashions, and perhaps  
employ you to sew a new  
gown for the season  
party.' I knew it wouldn't  
work, but I had no other  
choice but to flatter him.  
'I don't believe you,' he  
said, staring deeply into  
my eyes. 'The reason I  
don't believe you is

because I have watched  
you from afar, with joy  
in my heart and loathing  
in my soul. How can I  
love a woman whose very  
existence is my downfall?"  
His eyes were pleading  
now. 'I have looked upon  
you forever, it seems,  
and fought with myself  
constantly over my  
predicament.' He was  
coming closer to me now,  
and I could smell his  
manly scent. 'I didn't  
know how I should ever  
hope to meet you and  
then walk away, back to  
my own life without you...'  
He reached out to touch  
my arm and I pulled away,  
fearful of what his touch  
might do to me. Already I  
was heady with the  
excitement he was  
stirring in my empty soul.  
I was willing to do  
anything to keep him here  
before me, but I was  
fearful, for he was my  
rival, and I could not  
allow myself to love my  
fiercest competitor.

'I must be going now,' a  
tiny, quivering voice said.  
Was that me? I had  
thought I was a far  
stronger person than  
what I was experiencing. I  
had once been so aware  
of my emotions and in  
control of my feelings,  
that the way I was  
feeling and reacting to  
him was completely alien  
to me. I looked at him,  
knowing that his feelings  
for me mirrored those  
burgeoning in me. He took  
me in his arms and his  
silken lips touched my  
forehead. 'I knew you  
would come here tonight,'  
his deep voice revealed. 'I  
wanted you to come here,  
and I knew that the only  
way to get you to do

that was to bring about  
the breaking of your one  
and only needle,' he  
confessed.

'But how did you...' 'I  
went to your house  
earlier today, when you  
were at the weaver's. I  
knew that the only way  
to get you to come here  
would be dishonest, but I  
no longer cared. I scored  
your needle so deeply  
that it would break when  
you set out to use it.  
Please forgive me, but it  
was the only way.' 'Oh,  
Alain, I forgive you!  
Please, please, don't  
regret what you have  
done, for it has brought  
me to you...'